



National Agricultural
Statistics Service

United States Department of Agriculture

News Release

Maryland & Delaware Field Offices • 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway • Annapolis, MD 21401 • www.nass.usda.gov/md

October 02, 2006

U.S. AQUACULTURE A BILLION DOLLAR INDUSTRY, USDA REPORTS 2005 Aquaculture Census Shows Significant Growth

Aquaculture production is a billion-dollar industry, with sales of fish, shellfish and related products growing by 11.7 percent over the past seven years, according to results of the 2005 Census of Aquaculture. The 2005 count was the second nationwide aquaculture census conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The first took place in 1998. Results show that between 1998 and 2005, U.S. sales of aquaculture products grew from \$978 million to nearly \$1.1 billion.

Census results show that food fish – including catfish, perch, salmon, hybrid striped bass, tilapia and trout – accounted for 62 percent of all aquaculture sales in 2005. Mollusks – including abalone, clams, mussels and oysters – comprised 19 percent of 2005 sales. Crustaceans, such as lobsters and shrimp, and ornamental fish, such as koi and tropical fish, each accounted for approximately 5 percent of sales. They were followed by baitfish at 4 percent and sport fish at 2 percent.

Mississippi led the nation in sales of aquaculture products, with \$250 million dollars in 2005. Arkansas, Alabama and Louisiana were the other states with sales topping \$100 million. Louisiana had the largest number of aquaculture farms. The state's 873 farms were more than double the number in any other state.

Aquaculture in Maryland and Delaware is a small, but important industry. A variety of finfish, baitfish, crustaceans, mollusks, and other products are raised here. Sales of aquaculture products in Maryland totaled \$7.29 million in 2005 from 86 farms. Crustaceans were raised on the majority of the farms, and accounted for over one-third of the sales, at \$2.78 million. Delaware's three aquaculture farms accounted for \$1.87 million in sales.

The 2005 Census of Aquaculture collected detailed information on issues including production methods, water sources, sales, distribution and farm labor. For the purpose of the census, an aquaculture farm was any commercial or non-commercial place from which \$1,000 or more of aquaculture products were raised and sold, or distributed for restoration, conservation or recreational purposes during the census year.

Complete results of the 2005 Census of Aquaculture, including data specific to Maryland and Delaware, are available online at: www.nass.usda.gov/aquaculture/index.asp.